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Gina McCarthy, Administrator U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Mail Code: 1101A 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Washington, DC 20460	Samuel Unger, Executive Officer Regional Water Quality Control Board Los Angeles Region 320 West Fourth Street, Suite 200 Los Angeles, CA 90013
Jared Blumenfeld, Regional Administrator U.S. EPA, Region 9 75 Hawthorne Street San Francisco, CA 94105	Thomas Howard, Executive Director State Water Resources Control Board 1001 I Street Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Notice of Violation and Intent to File Suit under the Clean Water Act

To Whom It May Concern:

Brodsky & Smith, LLC ("Brodsky Smith") represents Matt Salnick ("Salnick") a citizen of the State of California. This letter is to give notice that Brodsky Smith, on Salnick's behalf, intends to file a civil action against Aurora Casting Engineering a/k/a Aurora Casting & Engineering, Inc. ("Aurora") for violations of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, 33 U.S.C. § 1251 *et seq.* ("Clean Water Act" or "CWA") at Aurora's facility located at 1790 Lemonwood Dr., Santa Paula, CA 93060 (the "Facility").

Salnick is a citizen of the State of California who is concerned with the environmental health of the Santa Clara River, and uses and enjoys the waters of the Santa Clara River, its inflows, and other areas of the Santa Clara River Watershed. Salnick's use and enjoyment of these waters are negatively affected by the pollution caused by Aurora's operations. Additionally, Salnick acts in the interest of the general public to prevent pollution in these waterways, for the benefit of their ecosystems, and for the benefits of all individuals and communities who use these waterways for various recreational, educational, and spiritual purposes.

This letter addresses Aurora's unlawful discharge of pollutants from the Facility via stormwater into the Santa Clara River. Specifically, investigation of the Facility has uncovered significant, ongoing, and continuous violations of the CWA and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System ("NPDES") General Permit No CAS000001 [State Water Resources Control Board] Water Quality Orders

No. 2014-0057-DWQ (the "Industrial Stormwater Permit") and 92-12-DWQ (as amended by Order No. 97-03-DWQ) (the "Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit").¹

CWA section 505(b) requires that sixty (60) days prior to the initiation of a civil action under CWA section 505(a), a citizen must give notice of his or her intent to file suit. 33 U.S.C. § 1365(b). Notice must be given to the alleged violator, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA"), and the State in which the violations occur. As required by section 505(b), this Notice of Violation and Intent to File Suit provides notice to Aurora of the violations that have occurred and which continue to occur at the Facility. After the expiration of sixty (60) days from the date of this Notice of Violation and the Intent to File Suit, Salnick intends to file suit in federal court against Aurora under CWA section 505(a) for the violations described more fully below.

During the 60-day notice period, Salnick is willing to discuss effective remedies for the violations noticed in this letter. We suggest that Aurora contact Salnick's attorneys at Brodsky & Smith within the next twenty (20) days so that these discussions may be completed by the conclusion of the 60-day notice period. Please note that we do not intend to delay the filing of a complaint in federal court, and service of the complaint shortly thereafter, even if discussions are continuing when the notice period ends.

I. THE LOCATION OF THE ALLEGED VIOLATIONS

A. The Facility

Aurora's Facility is located at 1790 Lemonwood Dr., Santa Paula, California. At the Facility, Aurora operates as a ferrous and non-ferrous foundry specializing in manufacturing of aerospace castings. At the Facility, the following industrial activities occur: (i) the making of assembly of wax patterns; (ii) the shelling of those patterns with a sand/slurry mixture; (iii) the burn-out of the wax pattern; (iv) the pouring of either steel or aluminum into the evacuated shell; (v) the knocking off of the shell; (vi) the cutoff and grinding of the parts; (vii) the sandblasting of the parts; (viii) accumulation of particulates in outside raw material storage area; and (ix) seepage from liquid raw materials. Other activities carried out in the regular course of business at the facility include container loading, maintenance, equipment storage, and waste storage. Repair and maintenance activities carried out at the facility include, but are not limited to, electrical, plumbing, roofing, asphalt, concrete, and utilities repairs as well as janitorial duties. Possible pollutants from the Facility include total suspended solids ("TSS"), waste oils, lubricants, fuel, trash, debris, hazardous materials, chemical oxygen demand ("COD"), oil and grease, pH, heavy metals, such as aluminum, iron, copper, zinc, and other pollutants. Stormwater from the Facility discharges, indirectly, into the Santa Clara River.

B. The Affected Water

The Santa Clara River and the Santa Clara River Watershed are waters of the United States. The CWA requires that water bodies such as the Santa Clara River and the Santa Clara River Watershed meet water quality objectives that protect specific "beneficial uses." The beneficial uses of the Santa Clara River and the Santa Clara River Watershed include commercial and sport fishing, estuarine habitat, fish migration, navigation, preservation of rare and endangered species, water contact and non-contact recreation, shellfish harvesting, fish spawning, and wildlife habitat. Contaminated stormwater from the Facility adversely affects the water quality of the Santa Clara River and the Santa Clara River Watershed, and threatens the beneficial uses and ecosystem of these watersheds, which includes habitats for threatened and endangered species.

¹ On April 1, 2014, the State Water Resources Control Board adopted an updated NPDES General Permit for Discharges Associated with Industrial Activity, Water Quality Order No. 2014-57-DWQ, which has taken force or effect on its effective date of July 1, 2015. As of the effective date, Water Quality Order No. 2014-57-DWQ has superseded and rescinded the prior Industrial Stormwater Permit except for purposes of enforcement actions brought pursuant to the prior permit.

II. THE FACILITY'S VIOLATIONS OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT

It is unlawful to discharge pollutants to waters of the United States, such as the Santa Clara River, without an NPDES permit or in violation of the terms and conditions of an NPDES permit. CWA § 301(a), 33 U.S.C. § 1311(a); *see also* CWA § 402(p), 33 U.S.C. § 1342(p) (requiring NPDES permit issuance for the discharge of stormwater associated with industrial activities). The Industrial Stormwater Permit authorizes certain discharges of stormwater, conditioned on compliance with its terms.

Aurora has submitted a Notice of Intent ("NOI") to be authorized to discharge stormwater from the Facility under the Industrial Stormwater Permit since at least 1999. However, information available to Salnick indicates that stormwater discharges from the Facility have violated several terms of the Industrial Stormwater Permit and the CWA. Apart from discharges that comply with the Industrial Stormwater Permit, the Facility lacks NPDES permit authorization for any other discharges of pollutants into waters of the United States.

A. Discharges in Excess of BAT/BCT Levels

The Effluent Limitations of the Industrial Stormwater Permit prohibit the discharge of pollutants from the facility in concentrations above the level commensurate with the application of best available technology economically achievable ("BAT") for toxic pollutants² and best conventional pollutant control technology ("BCT") for conventional pollutants.³ Industrial Stormwater Permit § I(D)(32), II(D)(2); Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit, Order Part B(3). The EPA has published Benchmark values set at the maximum pollutant concentration present if an industrial facility is employing BAT and BCT, as listed in Attachment 1 to this letter.⁴

Additionally, the Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit notes that effluent limitation guidelines for several named industrial categories have been established and codified by the Federal Government. *See* Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit pp. VIII. The Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit mandates that for facilities that fall within such industrial categories, compliance with the listed BAT and BCT for the specified pollutants listed therein must be met in order to be in compliance with the Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit. *Id.* Aurora falls within these named industrial categories and it must have complied with the effluent limitations found therein in order to have been in compliance with the Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit during its effective period. Based on Aurora's self-reporting data and/or lack thereof, Aurora has not met this requirement and was in violation of the Previous Stormwater Permit over a period of at least five (5) years.

Aurora's self-reporting of industrial stormwater discharges show a pattern of exceedances of Benchmark values in every instance of self-reporting. *See* Attachment 2. This pattern of exceedances of benchmark values and lack of self-reporting indicate that Aurora has failed and is failing to employ measures that constitute BAT and BCT in violation of the requirements of the Industrial Stormwater Permit and Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit. Salnick alleges and notifies Aurora that its stormwater discharges from the Facility have consistently contained and continue to contain levels of pollutants that exceed Benchmark Values for TSS, Copper, and Zinc.

² BAT is defined at 40 C.F.R. § 437.1 *et seq.* Toxic pollutants are listed at 40 C.F.R. § 401.15 and include copper, lead, and zinc, among others.

³ BCT is defined at 40 C.F.R. § 437.1 *et seq.* Conventional pollutants are listed at 40 C.F.R. § 401.16 and include BOD, TSS, oil and grease, pH, and fecal coliform.

⁴ The Benchmark values are part of the EPA's Multi-Sector General Permit ("MSGP") and can be found at: http://www.epa.gov/npdes/pubs/msgp2008_finalpermit.pdf. *See* 73 Fed. Reg. 56, 572 (Sept. 29, 2008) (Final National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges From Industrial Activities).

Aurora's ongoing discharges of stormwater containing levels of pollutants above EPA Benchmark values and BAT and BCT based levels of control also demonstrate that Aurora has not developed and implemented sufficient Best Management Practices ("BMPs") at the Facility. Proper BMPs could include, but are not limited to, moving certain pollution-generating activities under cover or indoors capturing and effectively filtering or otherwise treating all stormwater prior to discharge, frequent sweeping to reduce build-up of pollutants on-site, installing filters on downspouts and storm drains, and other similar measures.

Aurora's failure to develop and/or implement adequate pollution controls to meet BAT and BCT and the Facility violates and will continue to violate the CWA and the Industrial Stormwater Permit each and every day Aurora's discharges stormwater without meeting BAT/BCT. Salnick alleges that Aurora has discharged stormwater containing excessive levels of pollutants from the Facility to the Santa Clara River during at least every significant local rain event over 0.2 inches in the last five (5) years.⁵ Attachment 3 compiles all dates in the last five (5) years when a significant rain event occurred. Aurora is subject to civil penalties for each violation of the Industrial Stormwater Permit and the CWA within the past five (5) years.

B. Discharges Impairing Receiving Waters

The Industrial Stormwater Permit's Discharge Prohibitions disallow stormwater discharges that cause or threaten to cause pollution, contamination, or nuisance. *See* Industrial Stormwater Permit § III; Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit, Order Part A(2). The Industrial Stormwater Permit also prohibits stormwater discharges to surface or groundwater that adversely impact human health or the environment. *See* Industrial Stormwater Permit § VI(b)-(c); Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit, Order Part C(1). Receiving Water Limitations of the Industrial Stormwater Permit prohibit stormwater discharges that cause or contribute to an exceedance of applicable Water Quality Standards ("WQS") contained in a Statewide Water Quality Control Plan or the applicable Regional Water Board's Basin Plan. *See* Industrial Stormwater Permit § VI(a); Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit at Order Part C(2). Applicable WQS are set forth in the California Toxic Rule ("CTR")⁶ and Chapter 3 of the Los Angeles Region (Region 4) Water Quality Control Plan (the "Basin Plan").⁷ *See* Attachment 1. Exceedances of WQS are violations of the Industrial Stormwater Permit, the CTR, and the Basin Plan.

The Basin Plan establishes WQS for all Inland Surface and Coastal waters of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties, including but not limited to the following:

- Waters shall not contain suspended or settleable material in concentrations that cause nuisance or adversely affect beneficial users.
- Waters shall be free of changes in turbidity that cause nuisance or adversely affect beneficial uses. Increases in natural turbidity attributable to controllable water quality factors shall not exceed 20% where natural turbidity is between 0 and 50 nephelometric turbidity units ("NTU"), and shall not exceed 10% where the natural turbidity is greater than 50 NTU.
- All waters shall be maintained free of toxic substances in concentrations that are toxic to, or that produce detrimental physiological responses in, human, plant, animal, or aquatic life.

⁵ Significant local rain events are reflected in the rain gauge data available at: <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/cdo-web/search>.

⁶ The CTR is set forth at 40 C.F.R. § 131.38 and is explained in the Federal Register preamble accompanying the CTR promulgation set forth at 65 Fed. Reg. 31,682 (May 18, 2000).

⁷ The Basin Plan is published by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/losangeles/water_issues/programs/basin_plan/basin_plan_documentation.shtml.

- Surface waters shall not contain concentrations of chemical constituents in amounts that adversely affect any designated beneficial use.

Salnick alleges that Aurora's stormwater discharges have caused or contributed to exceedances of Receiving Water Limitations in the Industrial Stormwater Permit and the WQS set forth in the Basin Plan and CTR. These allegations are based on Aurora's self-reported data submitted to the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board. These sampling results indicate that Aurora's discharges are causing or threatening to cause pollution, contamination, and/or nuisance; adversely impacting human health or the environment; and violating applicable WQS. For example, Aurora's sampling results indicate exceedances of WQS for zinc. *See Attachment 2.*

Salnick alleges that each day that Aurora has discharged stormwater from the Facility, Aurora's stormwater has contained levels of pollutants that exceeded one or more of the Receiving Water Limitations and/or applicable WQS in the Santa Clara River. Salnick alleges that Aurora has discharged stormwater exceeding Receiving Water Limitations and/or WQS from the Facility to the Santa Clara River during at least every significant local rain event over 0.2 inches in the last five (5) years. *See Attachment 3.* Each discharge from the Facility that violates a Receiving Water Limitation or has caused or contributed, or caused or contributes, to an exceedance of an applicable WQS constitutes a separate violation of the Industrial Stormwater Permit and the CWA Aurora is subject to penalties for each violation of the Industrial Stormwater Permit and the CWA within the past five (5) years.

C. Failure to Develop and Implement an Adequate Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan

The Industrial Stormwater Permit requires dischargers to develop and implement an adequate Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan ("SWPPP"). *See Industrial Stormwater Permit, § X(B); Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit § A(1)(a).* The Industrial Stormwater Permit also requires dischargers to make all necessary revisions to existing SWPPPs promptly. *See Industrial Stormwater Permit, § X(B); Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit at Order Part E(2).*

The SWPPP must include, among other requirements, the following: a site map, a list of significant materials handled and stored at the site, a description and assessment of all Aurora pollutant sources, a description of the BMPs that will reduce or prevent pollutants in stormwater discharges, specification of BMPs designed to reduce pollutant discharge to BAT and BCT levels, a comprehensive site compliance evaluation completed each reporting year, and revisions to the SWPPP within 90 days after a facility manager determines that the SWPPP is in violation of any requirements of the Industrial Stormwater Permit. *See Industrial Stormwater Permit, § X(A); Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit Section § A.*

Based on information available to Salnick, Aurora has failed to prepare and/or implement an adequate SWPPP and/or failed to revise the SWPPP to satisfy each of the requirements of § X(A) of the Industrial Stormwater Permit and/or § A Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit. For Example, Aurora SWPPP does not include and/or Aurora has not implemented adequate BMPs designed to reduce pollutant levels in discharges to BAT and BCT levels in accordance with Section A(8) of the Industrial Stormwater Permit, as evidenced by the data in Attachment 2.

Accordingly, Aurora has violated the CWA each and every day that it has failed to develop and/or implement an adequate SWPPP meeting all of the requirements of § X(A) of the Industrial Stormwater Permit and/or § A Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit, and Aurora will continue to be in violation every day until it develops and implements an adequate SWPPP. Aurora is subject to penalties for each violation of the Industrial Stormwater Permit and the CWA occurring within the past five (5) years.

D. Failure to Develop and Implement an Adequate Monitoring and Reporting Program and to Perform Annual Comprehensive Site Compliance Evaluations

The Industrial Stormwater Permit requires facility operators to develop and implement a Monitoring and Reporting Program ("MRP"). *See* Industrial Stormwater Permit, § XI; Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit § B(1) and Order Part E(3). The Industrial Stormwater Permit requires that MRP ensure that each the facility's stormwater discharges comply with the Discharge Prohibitions, Effluent Limitations, and Receiving Water Limitations specified in the Industrial Stormwater Permit. *Id.* Facility operators must ensure that their MRP practices reduce or prevent pollutants in stormwater and authorized non-stormwater discharges as well as evaluate and revise their practices to meet changing conditions at the facility. *Id.* This may include revising the SWPPP as required by § X(A) of the Industrial Stormwater Permit and/or § A Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit.

The MRP must measure the effectiveness of BMPs used to prevent or reduce pollutants in stormwater and authorized non-stormwater discharges, and facility operators must revise the MRP whenever appropriate. *See* Industrial Stormwater Permit, § XI; Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit § at Section B. The Industrial Stormwater Permit requires facility operators to visually observe and collect samples of stormwater discharges from all drainage areas. *Id.* Facility operators are also required to provide an explanation of monitoring methods describing how the facility's monitoring program will satisfy these objectives. *Id.*

Aurora has been operating the Facility with an inadequately developed and/or inadequately implemented MRP, in violation of the substantive and procedural requirements set forth in Section B of the Industrial Stormwater permit. For example, the data in Attachment 2 indicates that Aurora's monitoring program has not ensured that stormwater dischargers are in compliance with the Discharge Prohibitions, Effluent Limitations, and Receiving Water Limitations of the Industrial Stormwater Permit as required by the Industrial Stormwater Permit, § XI and/or the Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit § B. The monitoring has not resulted in practices at the Facility that adequately reduce or prevent pollutants in stormwater as required by Industrial Stormwater Permit, § XI and/or the Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit § B. Similarly, the data in Attachment 2 indicates that Aurora's monitoring program has not effectively identified or responded to compliance problems at the Facility or resulted in effective revision of the BMPs in use or the Facility's SWPPP to address such ongoing problems as required by Industrial Stormwater Permit, § XI and/or the Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit § B.

As a part of the MRP, the Industrial Stormwater Permit specifies that Facility operators shall collect stormwater samples during "the first hour of discharge from (1) the first storm event of the wet season, and (2) at least one other storm event in the wet season." *See* Industrial Stormwater Permit, § XI(C) and/or the Previous Industrial Stormwater Permit § B(5)(a). Furthermore, should facility operators fail to collect samples from the first storm event of the wet season, they are still required to collect samples from two other storm events during the wet season, and explain in the annual report why the first storm event was not sampled. *Id.* Aurora, in clear violation of the terms of the Industrial Stormwater Permit, has failed to report a second storm event discharge from the 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014, reporting periods, despite the fact that there were several days during that time period with precipitation two-tenths of an inch or greater. *See* Attachments 2, 3. Furthermore, Aurora has failed to adequately explain why such sampling was not included.

As a result of Aurora's failure to adequately develop and/or implement an adequate MRP at the Facility, Aurora has been in daily and continuous violation of the Industrial Stormwater Permit and the CWA each and every day for the past five (5) years. These violations are ongoing. Aurora will continue to be in violation of the monitoring and reporting requirement each day that Aurora fails to adequately develop and/or implement an effective MRP at the Facility. Aurora is subject to penalties for each violation of the Industrial Stormwater Permit and the CWA occurring for the last five (5) years.

**ATTACHMENT 1: EPA BENCHMARKS AND WATER QUALITY STANDARDS FOR
DISCHARGES TO FRESHWATER**

A. EPA Benchmarks, 2008 Multi-Sector General Permit ("MSGP")

Parameter	Units	Benchmark Value	Source
Total Aluminum	Mg/L	0.75	2008 MSGP
Total Suspended Solids (TSS)	Mg/L	100	2008 MSGP
Total Copper	Mg/L	0.0038-0.0332*	2008 MSGP
Total Iron	Mg/L	1.0	2008 MSGP
Total Zinc	Mg/L	0.04-0.26*	2008 MSGP

*Dependent on Freshwater Hardness Range

**B. Water Quality Standards – Discharge Limitations and Monitoring Requirements
(40 CFR Part 131.38 (California Toxics Rule or CTR), May 18, 2000)**

Parameter	Units	Water Quality Objectives		Source
		4- Day Average	1-Hr Average	
Lead	Mg/L	0.0081	0.21	40 CFR Part 131.38
Zinc	Mg/L	0.081	0.090	40 CFR Part 131.38

**ATTACHMENT 2: TABLE OF EXCEEDENCES FOR
AURORA CASTING ENGINEERING a/k/a AURORA CASTING & ENGINEERING, INC**

The following table contains each stormwater sampling result which exceeds EPA Benchmarks and/or causes or contributes to an exceedance of CFR and/or Basin Plan Water Quality Standards. All EPA Benchmarks and CFR and/or Basin Plan Water Quality Standards are listed in Attachment 1. All stormwater samples were reported by the Facility during the past five (5) years.

Reporting Period	Sample Date	Parameter	Result	Unit
2014-2015	12/30/2015	Copper, Total	0.15	Mg/L
2014-2015	12/30/2015	Copper, Total	0.06	Mg/L
2014-2015	04/07/2015	Copper, Total	0.16	Mg/L
2014-2015	04/07/2015	Zinc, Total	0.36	Mg/L
2014-2015	04/07/2015	TSS	194	Mg/L
2014-2015	04/07/2015	Copper, Total	0.81	Mg/L
2014-2015	04/07/2015	Zinc, Total	2.09	Mg/L
2014-2015	04/07/2015	TSS	101	Mg/L
2013-2014	02/06/2014	Copper, Total	0.08	Mg/L
2013-2014	02/06/2014	Zinc, Total	0.27	Mg/L
2013-2014	02/06/2014	Copper, Total	0.19	Mg/L
2012-2013	11/28/2012	Copper, Total	0.45	Mg/L
2012-2013	11/28/2012	Zinc, Total	0.55	Mg/L
2012-2013	11/28/2012	TSS	174	Mg/L
2012-2013	11/28/2012	Copper, Total	0.31	Mg/L
2011-2012	10/05/2011	Copper, Total	0.1	Mg/L
2011-2012	10/05/2011	Copper, Total	0.06	Mg/L

**ATTACHMENT 3: ALLEGED DATES OF EXCEEDANCES BY
AURORA CASTING ENGINEERING a/k/a AURORA CASTING & ENGINEERING, INC
January 1, 2011 – July 14, 2016**

Days with precipitation two-tenths of an inch or greater, as reported by NOAA's National Climatic Data Center, Station: Oxnard Ventura Co Airport, CA US, GHCND:USW00093110, when a stormwater discharge from the Facility is likely to have occurred. <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/cdo-web/search>

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